Reading for Meaning Common Assessment

**The Great Depression: Striving for Prosperity in America**

     The Stock Market Crash of 1929 marked an era of turmoil and instability for America known as the Great Depression. Millions of people who lost their life savings and their jobs eventually became homeless, only to find that their president, Herbert Hoover, felt the government should not intervene. However, New York governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, “I pledge myself to a New Deal for the American people.” And when he was elected to office in 1932, he made good on that pledge. Through a series of programs, he stimulated the economy, got people back to work, and protected the American people through the Great Depression.  
     In 1935, for example, Roosevelt created the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The WPA created much-needed jobs for the unemployed, at the same time improving the country as a whole. WPS workers erected buildings like schools and post offices. They also worked on bridges, highways, and other infrastructure projects. In addition, the WPA found work for people with artistic capabilities, such as writers, musicians, and theater directors. In fact, WPA murals still exist. You may have seen them in places like zoos, courthouses, and hospitals. The WPA, which existed until 1943, provided work and a paycheck to almost 9 million Americans.  
     Later that year, Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act of 1935. At a time when people had lost much—if not all—of the money for which they had worked, the Social Security Act guaranteed pensions to millions of Americans. It also established unemployment insurance so people who had lost their jobs could receive money until they found work. Thanks to Roosevelt’s initiative, these policies are still with us today and continue to protect many Americans when they need help the most.  
     In many ways, Roosevelt saved the United States. He believed the government should become the active force in driving the country toward prosperity and held to that idea regardless of any opposition. In 1941, the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor ignited World War II, and the war effort helped to accelerate the production of goods and services in the United States. Ultimately, this ended the Great Depression and put the country back on the road to prosperity. However, it was Roosevelt’s programs that held the United States together for so many years by providing work, income, and hope in a time of unprecedented economic terror.

**1.** Which of the following best summarizes this passage?  
  
**W.** Many unique programs put Americans back to work during the Great Depression. Some people helped build highways, schools, and post offices, while others painted murals still seen today in hospitals, zoos, and courthouses. In addition, Social Security was created, which allows people to receive income in the form of pensions.  
  
**X.** After the Stock Market Crash of 1929, the United States was thrust into an era of economic turbulence. Unfortunately, President Herbert Hoover firmly believed that government intervention was not the correct course of action. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president in 1932, however, he immediately changed government policies.  
  
**Y.** World War II helped pull the United States out of the Great Depression. Following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, the country suddenly needed additional output of goods and services, which greatly stimulated the economy. Prior to the war, work programs, such as the WPA, were needed to keep the country functioning.  
  
**Z.** The Great Depression, sparked by the Stock Market Crash of 1929, left many Americans without employment or income. After taking office in 1932, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created diverse programs to help people earn a living, which kept the country functioning until the Great Depression ended with World War II.

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|  | **B.** | W |

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|  | **C.** | X |

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|  | **D.** | Y |

For budgetary reasons, Roosevelt High School is forced to cut some of its extracurricular activities. The school’s staff has decided to cut the bowling team, the model rocket club, the French club, and the math league. The school’s newspaper, the Roosevelt Register, ran two student-written editorials about this decision.   
  
**Editorial 1**  
  
     Roosevelt has had a problem funding all of its extracurricular activities for years. My parents are always complaining about sky-high tax hikes to pay for all of the school’s activities, yet the sports and clubs keep getting their budgets cut! Part of the problem is that students constantly petition the school to add clubs and sports teams that are either unpopular or do not do well in competitions. The school gives them money that could go toward other clubs and sports that are much more important. I think it was a good idea for the school to cut these activities. The bowling team has never won a state title, and there are only five kids in the model rocketry club. Also, the French club takes expensive trips to Europe, and the math league came in last in its most recent competition. Why should Roosevelt take money away from things like football and baseball and give it to activities that are wasting it?   
  
**Editorial 2**  
  
     I was really disappointed to find out that Roosevelt is cutting back on its extracurricular activities. The French club and the math league were the only two clubs I was a member of, and now they are gone. I think it is pretty unfair for the school to pick on just four activities. Why does the school have the right to tell the students which clubs and sports have value and which ones do not have value? Just because some activities have fewer students does not mean that they are not important. I joined the French club so I could improve my grades in French class, and my grades went from C’s to A’s. Math league is a lot of fun and, other than this past school year, we have always done well in state competitions. I am sure these clubs would have looked good on my high school transcript when I start applying to colleges, but now I will not have any current activities to put down on my applications. I understand that the school has a difficult time paying for its sports and clubs, but there must be another way to save money without making students suffer.

**2.** The authors of both editorials agree that

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|  | **A.** | it is hard for Roosevelt to pay for all of its activities. |

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|  | **B.** | the math league does well in most of its competitions. |

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|  | **C.** | some activities clearly have more value than others. |

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|  | **D.** | Roosevelt should not have cut any clubs or sports. |

**What is Ayurveda?**

     Ayurveda is an alternative health system. It began in India over five thousand years ago and is still widely used there. The word itself combines two Sanskrit words for life and knowledge, or science. It is a complete medical system and emphasizes the mind's effect on the body. Balance is a key concept. For your body to be free of disease, your mind must be in balance. Mental balance will naturally extend to the body. This balance extends to your diet. Proper diet is the basis of good health. Every ayurvedic meal includes all six tastes: sweet, salty, bitter, sour, spicy, and sharp. Meals are designed this way to prevent cravings and ensure satisfaction. Preparing food this way requires a lot of skill. For this reason, ayurvedic chefs are very well paid.

**3.** Which sentence from the passage supports the idea that Ayurveda is about balance?

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|  | **A.** | "The word itself combines two Sanskrit words for life and knowledge, or science." |

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|  | **B.** | "Preparing food this way requires a lot of skill." |

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|  | **C.** | "Mental balance will naturally extend to the body." |

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|  | **D.** | "It is a complete medical system and emphasizes the mind's effect on the body." |

**4.** What is the main idea of this passage?

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|  | **A.** | Ayurveda is an alternative health system. |

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|  | **B.** | Ayurveda uses six tastes to reduce cravings. |

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|  | **C.** | Ayurveda means "life science" in Sanskrit. |

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|  | **D.** | Ayurveda requires well-paid chefs. |

     As of January 1, 2010, it is illegal to text message while driving in the state of Oregon. In addition, adults must use a hands-free cell phone device, and teenagers may not use cell phones of any kind while driving. Oregon is now one of several states that have enacted such laws, a trend that seems to be gaining strength.  
     Traffic statistics indicate that people who text message and drive are four times more likely to get into a traffic accident than those who don’t. In studies conducted at the University of Utah, students driving a simulator proved this statistic correct, as they often got into simulated accidents when they attempted to text. This came as a surprise to many drivers, who had boasted that texting in no way impacted their driving.  
     Brain research has recently shown that cell phone conversations distract drivers and reduce their response time far more than conversations with other passengers in the car. Studies of which parts of the brain are in use during certain activities show that drivers can generally concentrate on the road and talk to someone in the vehicle at the same time. However, conducting a conversation with an “absent” person via cell phone pulls the driver’s concentration away from the task at hand and thus puts the driver and everyone else at risk. The new laws reflect this research and aim to reduce or eliminate cell-phone related mishaps on the road.

**5.** Based on this article, which of the following statements is an **unsupported inference**?

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|  | **A.** | Talking to someone else in the car while driving does not carry the same level of risk as talking on a cell phone. |

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|  | **B.** | People who text message while driving are less able to concentrate on the road than those who don't. |

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|  | **C.** | Drivers under the age of 18 are no longer allowed to talk on hands-free devices while driving in the state of Oregon. |

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|  | **D.** | Teenagers who text message and drive get into more traffic accidents than adults who text. |

     Cubism is a unique form of painting utilizing geometric shapes. Invented by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in the early 20th century, Cubism continues to enlighten and confuse people today.  
     Picasso and Braque developed Cubism between 1907 and 1914 in Paris, though they are not credited with naming their new art form. It was actually Louis Vauxcelles, a French art critic, who named it after viewing some of Braque’s paintings. Seeing the geometric shapes Braque used to create an abstract painting of a landscape, Vauxcelles called the shapes “cubes.” However, the Cubist form does not strictly take itself from geometry, though it might seem to. Picasso and Braque were also influenced by various non-Western sources. For example, Picasso’s Cubist painting Les Demoiselles d'Avignon (1907) was deeply influenced by African art, which the artist saw at a Paris museum in 1907.  
     In Cubism, the traditional techniques are rejected. Paintings are not intended to imitate the real world as we see it. Instead, planes and two-dimensional forms are used—sometimes overlapped—in a representation of what is seen with the human eye. In addition, bright colors are sometimes traded for more monochromatic shades (e.g., blacks, browns, grays), as Picasso once did in a series of Cubist paintings.  
     Picasso and Braque’s unorthodox creation attracted many other painters, such as Fernand Léger, Roger de La Fresnaye, and Jean Metzinger. Cubism also extended into 20th-century sculpture and architecture. This intriguing movement influenced abstract art around the world, including painters in Russia, Italy, Germany, and the United States. In fact, its effects are felt throughout the artistic world even today.

**6.** Cubism is an unconventional painting technique created between 1907 and 1914 by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. By definition, Cubist art ignores long-accepted painting techniques. It instead brings one- and two-dimensional shapes to the canvas, often opting for drab colors as well. A simplistic representation of what is seen in real life, Cubism can be a puzzling art form. In addition to Cubism, both Picasso and Braque were known for their sculptures.  
  
What sentence should be removed from this summary?

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|  | **A.** | "It instead brings one- and two-dimensional shapes to the canvas, often opting for drab colors as well." |

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|  | **B.** | "A simplistic representation of what is seen in real life, Cubism can be a puzzling art form." |

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|  | **C.** | "Cubism is an unconventional painting technique created between 1907 and 1914 by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque." |

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|  | **D.** | "In addition to Cubism, both Picasso and Braque were known for their sculptures." |

**7.**

**Blah! Humbug!**  
by Audge Podge

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| "Sit down, and tell me about yourself!" is the worst sentence I've ever uttered. Travis went on and on and on and on, but I heard no words come from his mouth, just "blah, blah, blah" for hours it seemed without taking a single, solitary breath. I couldn't keep my bloodshot eyes open, but he didn't seem to mind my fatigue. Instead of falling madly in love with him, I fell fast asleep, drooling on the couch, as Travis hung on his every word. |

Which line from the poem suggests that Travis prefers his own company?

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|  | **A.** | "but he didn't seem to mind my fatigue." |

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|  | **B.** | "without taking a single, solitary breath," |

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|  | **C.** | "but I heard no words come from his mouth," |

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|  | **D.** | "Instead of falling madly in love with him," |

**8.**      Ancient India made several significant advances in the field of medical surgery. Many complex surgeries during that time were performed without anesthesia. Surgery, one of the eight branches of *Ayurveda*—a system of traditional medicine, was very advanced and complex. Plastic surgery, dental surgery, and extraction of cataracts were also common during that time.   
     A medical theorist and practitioner named Sushruta in ancient India wrote many important books on surgery. The collections of his writings on surgery and other branches of medicine are known as *Sushruta Samhita*. These writings describe many important branches of surgery: excision, scarification, puncturing, exploration, extraction, evacuation, and suturing. They also focus on study of cadavers, or dead bodies, in order to understand human anatomy.   
     Sushruta was most skilled in plastic, cosmetic, and optical surgery. His technique of repairing a disfigured nose, rhinoplasty, is famous to this day. In fact, Sushruta also advocated the practice of operations on objects such as watermelons, clay pots, and reeds. Because of his contributions, Sushruta is known as the "Father of Surgery."  
  
Which detail from the passage supports the idea that Sushruta's writings are relevant today?

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|  | **A.** | In fact, Sushruta also advocated the practice of operations on objects. . . . |

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|  | **B.** | Plastic surgery, dental surgery, and extraction of cataracts were also common. . . . |

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|  | **C.** | Many complex surgeries during that time were performed without anesthesia. |

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|  | **D.** | His technique of repairing a disfigured nose, rhinoplasty, is famous to this day. |

**9.**      Our local school board is planning to eliminate physical education (P.E.). To some degree, this is because of the way P.E. is taught in our district. It's not really physical education so much as it is games education. Most P.E. classes are focused on how to play sports, not how to get and stay fit. I would say this method of teaching has succeeded in making a nation of sport fanatics, but judging by the fact that 60% of Americans are overweight or obese, it has not succeeded in making us healthy.  
     First of all, competitive sports aren't all that much fun if you are neither competitive nor athletic. That means a lot of people, like some of my classmates, aren't interested and don't care about P.E. Second, even people who enjoy playing sports, like me, rarely play those sports to stay fit as adults. We're wasting our time with traditional P.E. because it turns off more students than it excites and doesn't teach any of them how to be fit adults.   
     Given that all this is true, scrapping P.E. is a fitness disaster waiting to happen. We have a responsibility to educate our society about what it takes to be healthy and then train them in ways of doing that. Doing this through P.E. classes is important for instilling knowledge early on in today's youth about how they can take care of their bodies by exercising. Children can't make healthy food choices unless we educate them about that. Football and basketball may be exciting, but we need active citizens who exercise their whole bodies and not just their remote control fingers. Please contact your school board representative and ask them to keep P.E. in the curriculum.   
  
Which choice best describes the author's purpose in writing this passage?

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|  | **A.** | to persuade readers that P.E. is important |

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|  | **B.** | to inform people that P.E. is being cut |

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|  | **C.** | to describe how P.E. is paid for by taxes |

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|  | **D.** | to explain the purpose of cutting P.E. |

**10.**      Mr. Karlsen had a reputation not just as being the hardest math teacher in the history of my school but also as being the toughest driver's education instructor, and it was just my bad luck to get him for both. Every time I got behind the wheel of that nondescript little grey car with six-foot-six Mr. K in the passenger seat, I froze. Everything I'd read and learned just slipped out the window like a puff of smoke.  
     "Turn left at the next intersection," he'd say as I pulled cautiously out into traffic.  
     *Left*, I'd think, *which way is left?* And then I'd forget to signal, and Mr. K would turn red-faced and start bellowing about how *this* is *exactly* why kids shouldn't be driving. The worst part is that I really wanted to impress him because somewhere in the recesses of my brain I thought he might give me a passing grade in my geometry class if he thought I wouldn't be a menace on the roads. Fat chance, though, not at the rate I was going.  
     Mr. K loved to make kids "multi-task" while they were driving because he knew that's what we'd all be doing when we finally got our license. "Turn on the radio," he'd say, "now turn on the windshield wipers and roll down the window." I could barely concentrate on the road while trying to follow his directions. By the end of an afternoon with him, my old bicycle at home was looking better and better.  
  
Which of the following inferences is supported by the information in this essay?

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|  | **A.** | The narrator is not doing well in math class. |

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|  | **B.** | Mr. Karlsen is the only driver's education teacher. |

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|  | **C.** | Mr. Karlsen is trying to cause an accident. |

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|  | **D.** | The narrator does not know how to drive. |

**11.**

**Chad's Imaginary Friend**

     When Chad was little, he had an imaginary friend. The friend's name was Nathaniel, and he was always getting Chad into trouble. If Chad's toys were strewn about the playroom, it was because Nathaniel hadn't cleaned up after himself. A ketchup stain on the dining room carpet was due to Nathaniel's clumsiness. Ditto was the case of the cracked flower vase in the kitchen.  
Of course, like most children, Chad eventually stopped talking about his imaginary friend. In fact, he forgot about Nathaniel altogether—that is, until one cold December evening, the week after his 15th birthday.   
     It was in a desolate highway diner that Chad spotted Nathaniel, seated alone at a table. Chad was spooked. He almost turned to leave. But Nathaniel called out to him.   
     "Wait," Nathaniel said. "Why don't you join me?"  
     Bewildered, Chad approached Nathaniel's table and took a seat. When the waitress came by, Chad ordered a soda and a burger. He tried to act normal, as if nothing extraordinary was happening, but under the table his legs were trembling.   
     "Don't be afraid," Nathaniel said. "I just thought you could use some company while you ate."   
     With that, Chad summoned the courage to look into Nathaniel's eyes. Nathaniel's appearance had changed slightly with age, and yet there could be no doubt: this was his mischievous boyhood friend.  
     Chad thought of all the good times he'd had with Nathaniel when they were younger. These memories relaxed him, and by the time the food arrived, he and Nathaniel were rehashing old times. All in all it was an enjoyable dinner, and Chad was sorry when it was time to go. He bid farewell to his old friend and left him seated alone at the table the way he'd found him.   
     Just before Chad got into his car, he heard someone calling his name frantically. He turned to see that the waitress from the diner was running after him, waving a piece of paper.   
     "You didn't pay for your meal!" she said.  
     "My friend's picking up the tab," Chad explained. But no sooner had these words left his mouth than Chad glanced through the diner's front window and noticed something. The table at which he had been sitting was empty.  
     "Sorry," Chad said, handing the waitress his money. "It's so typical of him to get me into trouble like this."   
  
What was the author's purpose in writing this passage?

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|  | **A.** | to inform the reader of unhealthy behaviors common to children |

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|  | **B.** | to explain why many children see things that adults do not see |

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|  | **C.** | to entertain the reader with an amusing story about a boy |

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|  | **D.** | to persuade the reader to take imaginary friends seriously |

**Saturday Matinee**  
by T. Herlinger

     Valencia Torres and her classmates noisily took their seats in the front row of the theater, their English teacher, Mr. Thurmon, trying in vain to hush them. But when the lights went down and the orchestra in the pit in front of them launched into the overture, no one moved. Valencia was hardly breathing as the stage lights came up on a square in Seville, Spain, and a nearby cigarette factory. When the girls emerged from the factory at the end of their shift, Valencia imagined she herself was the fiery Carmen, singing to the men that love cannot be tamed. At the end of the first act, the audience applause broke her reverie, and she sat back in her seat, blinking as the house lights came up for a short intermission.  
     Later that evening, Valencia recounted her first opera experience to her parents. Though the opera had been sung in French, the actors made the meaning of the romantic story clear, and she retold it to the best of her memory. She had kept the theater program, which had many interesting notes about the cast members and the opera, and she translated it for her parents. Lupe and Juan Torres watched their animated daughter with curiosity and admiration. She was growing up fast, learning about things they had never had access to in Mexico. New York City had been the right choice for raising their family. Valencia and her brothers would thrive here, and who knows? Maybe Valencia would go to acting school, and someday, dazzle the Saturday Matinee crowd with her own fiery Carmen.

**12.** Which sentence from the passage above supports the inference that Valencia's parents did not speak English?

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|  | **A.** | Lupe and Juan Torres watched their animated daughter with curiosity and admiration. |

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|  | **B.** | She was growing up fast, learning about things they had never had access to in Mexico. |

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|  | **C.** | She had kept the theater program, which had many interesting notes about the cast members and the opera, and she translated it for her parents. |

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|  | **D.** | Valencia was hardly breathing as the stage lights came up on a square in Seville, Spain, and a nearby cigarette factory. |

**Thought Watching**

**(1)**     Many people think that meditation means emptying your mind of thoughts. This is a setup for failure. The mind thinks; that's what it does. How do you not think? For instance, don't think about a lemon right now. Don't think about the yellow color or how it makes your mouth water.  
**(2)**     When people try to empty their minds of thoughts, they discover how full of thoughts their minds are. If meditation means having an empty mind, they decide they cannot meditate. Giving up, they miss out on the benefits of meditation.  
**(3)**     Meditation isn't about stopping your thoughts. It's about watching them. Here's an easy way to do that: Imagine that your mind is a river. Your thoughts are like different-colored leaves floating on it. Pull yourself to the banks of this river. Label the leaves as they drift past. Label your thoughts with the emotions they carry: angry thought, happy thought, or sad thought.  
**(4)**     One of those thoughts is likely to pull you back into the river. If you notice that has happened, take a deep breath. In your mind's eye, pull yourself to the banks of your mind. Label the next thought that passes down the river. Every time you fall in the river, take a deep breath and pull yourself to the bank.  
**(5)**     Labeling your thoughts is an easy way to watch your thoughts.

**13.** What is paragraph 3 mostly about?

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|  | **A.** | making colored labels for your emotions |

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|  | **B.** | a technique for watching your thoughts |

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|  | **C.** | arranging thoughts so they float properly |

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|  | **D.** | a discussion of colored leaves on rivers |

**14.** What is the main point of paragraph 2?

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|  | **A.** | Only some disciplined people can make their minds stop thinking. |

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|  | **B.** | Many people try to meditate but cannot sit still long enough to do so. |

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|  | **C.** | The major cause of unhappiness is the failure to stop sad thoughts. |

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|  | **D.** | People give up meditation because they are unable to stop their thoughts. |

**15.** What is the main idea of this passage?

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|  | **A.** | Meditation means stopping your thoughts. |

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|  | **B.** | Meditation requires thinking about lemons. |

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|  | **C.** | Meditation is about watching your thoughts. |

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|  | **D.** | Meditation should always be done on a river. |

**Never Mind the Money, Enjoy the Sale**  
by Moll Flowers

     Last weekend, my husband and I moved from our two-bedroom apartment to a new house. Before moving, we held a yard sale. We owned clothing we hadn't worn in years, furniture that had been relegated to the attic, and a bunch of outmoded electronic devices. We figured it didn't make sense to move these things to our new house. They had no remaining value to us. So why not get rid of them and have fun doing it?   
     While the decision to host a yard sale might have been easy, the preparation was anything but. First off, my husband hurt his back while carrying a shelf down the front steps of the apartment. Second, it started raining on Saturday morning, and we didn't have a tarp or anything to cover our possessions to keep them dry. Third, my husband and I spent most of the first day arguing about the value of our belongings-and these were things we hadn't used in years!  
     The truth is that we'd gotten distracted by irrelevant details. The moment we stopped worrying about pricing and profits, we were able to relax. From that point forward, the yard sale was actually fun. Almost every one of our neighbors stopped by to chat with us about the things we were selling. These were people who had lived on our street for years, and yet in all that time we'd never really gotten to know them. In fact, by the end of the weekend, I think we'd befriended more neighbors in two days than we had in years.   
     Depending on how you look at it, our yard sale was both a success and a failure. We probably made less than a 100 dollars, and my husband's back injury prevented him from helping much with the move. And yet, despite these setbacks, it was one of the more enjoyable weekends of the summer. In fact, we've decided not to have a housewarming party when we move into our new place. We figure it makes more sense to have a yard sale.

**16.** The main purpose of the second paragraph of this passage is to

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|  | **A.** | question the practice of holding yard sales outdoors during winter. |

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|  | **B.** | introduce the idea that the author relies heavily upon her husband. |

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|  | **C.** | criticize anyone who is simple enough to try to profit from a yard sale. |

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|  | **D.** | suggest that the narrator is not fully prepared for a yard sale. |

**Passage 1**

**The Note**

     All Rhonda wanted to do after she got Tracy's note was to barricade herself in somewhere, and tiny little Appleton Library seemed as good a place as any. She brought a few schoolbooks with her and a sci-fi novel in case she just wanted to lose herself. But as she sat in the downstairs cubicle, all she could do was read Tracy's note over and over:

Rhonda,   
  
         I won't be going to leadership camp with you after all over Spring Break. My aunt offered to take me on a trip to Costa Rica, and I couldn't pass it up. Sorry. Hope you have fun!  
  
Your friend,  
Tracy

     As Rhonda read over those last words, she felt a sob well up in her throat. She and her best friend Tracy had been planning their 10 days at leadership camp for months—how they would be roommates, go to classes, and study together. And now "sorry" is all she had to say? Rhonda fought back the tears, but it was of no use. Suddenly, she felt lonelier than she had ever been in her life.  
  
**Passage 2**

**No Take-Backs**

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| Not four feet separated us when you spoke those fatal words, the corners of your mouth quivering I wanted to snatch them from the air, make you take them back, and return to a time when every word you uttered rang clear and pure and true But the great ticking clock that marks our minutes and hours plods relentlessly forward And there are no take-backs |

**17.** Which idea is found in the poem but not in the passage?

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|  | **A.** | Most people cannot be trusted. |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **B.** | We cannot move backward in time. |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **C.** | Rejection can make us feel very alone. |

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|  | **D.** | It is hard to be with someone who is perfect. |

**18.** How are the poem and passage similar?

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|  | **A.** | They both talk about sibling rivalry. |

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|  | **B.** | They both use descriptive language. |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **C.** | They both involve feelings of betrayal. |

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|  | **D.** | They both try to persuade the reader. |

     The Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956 was one of the most significant events of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Though it might have seemed like a fruitless endeavor to some when it began on December 1, 1955, the boycott was able to break segregation laws throughout Alabama.   
     The true spark of the boycott came unintentionally from Rosa Parks, now known as “the mother of the Civil Rights Movement.” As stipulated by a Montgomery city ordinance, African American bus riders were required to sit in the back of the bus. In addition, they were required to give up their seats to white riders if the “white seats” were taken. Ms. Parks, an African American seamstress born in 1913, obeyed the law and sat in the back of the bus. However, when a white man told her to give up her seat, she refused. The mere refusal was enough to get her arrested.   
     It is popular belief that Parks’ civil disobedience was merely the result of exhaustion. However, it is not widely known that plans were underway by others to soon challenge the Montgomery bus laws—and that Parks was well aware of this. Ms. Parks had belonged to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1944. As a member of the Montgomery chapter, she knew that some civil rights leaders had been planning action to overturn the bus segregation laws for some time. Apparently, Ms. Parks’ action was impulsive although it hastened the battle for equality in Montgomery.   
     As a result of Ms. Parks’ arrest, the NAACP and other activists staged the now-famous bus boycott. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., began organizing the boycott immediately, and soon fliers were being sent around Montgomery. His call to action resulted in African Americans walking or carpooling rather than paying the fares of the Montgomery bus system. Since 70% of the city’s bus ridership was made up of African Americans, the bus system was hit hard financially.   
     Prompted by the activities in Montgomery, the United States Supreme Court put an end to the bus segregation laws. On November 13, 1956, it struck down the laws in not only Montgomery, but all of Alabama, stating that these laws violated the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. On December 20, 1956, the Montgomery buses were finally desegregated. The boycott had lasted 381 days.   
     It was very fitting that Ms. Parks would be one of the first African Americans to ride on the newly-desegregated buses and that Dr. King would go on to further victories for the Civil Rights Movement.

**19.** Which of the following paragraphs best summarizes this passage?

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|  | **A.** | Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks were instrumental in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. These two Alabama residents took part in the Montgomery Bus Boycott after Parks was arrested for not giving up her seat to a white man on a bus. |

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|  | **B.** | As a member of the NAACP, Rosa Parks knew of plans to challenge the bus laws and bravely took action. Refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a bus, she was arrested. Her arrest launched the desegregation of Montgomery's bus system. |

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|  | **C.** | Rosa Parks, an African American who refused to give up her bus seat to a white man, initiated the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Organized by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the boycott eventually led to bus desegregation laws in Alabama. |

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|  | **D.** | The U.S. Supreme Court was responsible for overturning desegregation laws in Alabama. It understood that African American rights were being violated because the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was not being upheld. |

# Answers

1. A   
2. A   
3. C   
4. A   
5. D   
6. D   
7. A   
8. D   
9. A   
10. A   
11. C   
12. C   
13. B   
14. D   
15. C   
16. D   
17. B   
18. C   
19. C